796

alãgena haɨtige (b1)
to sing in the place.

534 A very strict taboo rests on the flageolets. Only the adult
784 men can play them:

46. ũĩnore ũĩnia imaɨgare.
Children do not know how to play the flageolet.

And the sight of the instruments is rigorously forbidden the women:

denaɨtie iatiaeninĩnena ednaɨo iãneni (b1)
the women cannot see them, only the men see.

These flageolets are made in great secrecy, in the same place where they find suitable bamboo. If the musical expedition returns by day, they hide the flageolets in the branches of a tree not far from the camp or from the village. They only bring them out at night, at the moment of the concert, and the women must then retire to the huts or under the shelters, and hide their heads in
[688] their arms. If one of them violates the taboo, they claim she would be pursued by all the men and killed by blows of a stick. We did not have the chance to attend one of these festivals, but, as we desired to collect the musical repertory of the flageolets, we were able, with a certain amount of difficulty, to arrange it so that a mission was sent to find bamboo and make instruments for us (it was necessary to go about 15 kilometers). Having left in the morning, the group returned in the middle of the night, and until daylight we made music some distance from the camp in order to avoid all feminine indis-
[534] cretion. As each instrument sounds a little different from the others, the playing produces an illusion of harmony which is added to the charm of the melody, in itself very real.

534 It is possible that all the musical instruments of the Nambikwara
789 are connected to activities of an economic-social character. Some testimonials, a decisive confirmation of which I was not able to obtain, present the nasal flutes (araɨtasu, a2) as meant to assure a rich harvest of the fruit piquy. The season of piquy, which grows in
[222] abundance in the plains, is actually an impatiently awaited period for the Indians. The fruit is admiringly weighed and said to have "lots of fat." Likewise the flutes of Pan (asinzu, a1; juauzere, b1) would be employed in the rites preceding hunting expeditions. In
[192] the case of nasal flutes, a double analogy has been pointed out by certain informants between their form and that [106] of the pit of the piquy, and between their name and the name of the piquy (ahaɨru, a 1/2). The latter analogy exists only in the eastern dialect

2: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939)1948
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particular form of their own. Death is identified with these spirits. Men's souls are believed to be reincarnated as jaguars, whereas women's and children's souls are taken away by wind and thunder, never to return.

The highest being is the Thunder, with which any man, though usually a shaman, may have personal contact through revelations and visions. Women, however, except when very old, and children are deprived of these privileges. Women are also forbidden, under pain of death, to see the sacred flageolets (see Musical Instruments, p. 368) played at the ceremonies marking the beginning and the end of the dry season.

SHAMANISM AND MEDICINE

The shaman is sometimes distinct from—but more frequently identified with—the political chief. He is distinguished by having the privilege of polygyny, playing the leading role in ceremonial life, and possessing special supernatural powers. He treats patients by sucking out the disease or by fighting it with small ritual arrows called "thunder-arrows."

In addition to magical cures, the *Nambicuara* treat sickness with numerous medicinal plants, which are used externally or internally according to the disease. For eye infection, which is very frequent, they apply the infusion of a special bark with the help of a container made of leaves.

FOLKLORE, LORE, AND LEARNING

The only legend recorded by Lévi-Strauss (n.d. b) is a flood tale relating the destruction of human life and its re-creation through several incestuous marriages between the offspring of an old woman, who was the only being who escaped the disaster.

The only basic numbers used for counting are one and two, but the natives can reckon higher figures by combining these.

Colors are classified differently according to the dialects. The *Eastern, Central, Southern,* and *Western Nambicuara* agree in putting yellow and green in the same category, whereas the *Northern* group identify red and yellow, and class green, blue, and black together.

Some *Nambicuara* groups call stars by the same name which designates the spirits. The year is divided into two seasons and an undetermined number of lunar months. The day includes six main stages, each based on the position of the sun. Space is divided into two sections that are perpendicular to each other, one corresponding to the apparent movement of the sun and the other to the direction of the main waterways.

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